

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 to 7 (Canceled).

8 (Currently Amended). A method for deploying an endovascular prosthesis comprising ~~the steps of~~

(i) providing a self-expanding prosthesis for deployment in a blood vessel, the prosthesis having a distal end and a proximal end, the prosthesis being adapted to self expand from a radially reduced configuration to a radially enlarged configuration,

(ii) providing an apparatus as defined in claim 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 comprising a catheter sized and configured for introduction into a blood vessel, the catheter having a distal end, a carrier on the distal end sized and configured to carry the prosthesis, a tapered outer sheath tapered between a larger distal diameter and a smaller proximal diameter and movable between an advanced position enclosing the prosthesis when in the radially reduced configuration and a withdrawn position free of the prosthesis permitting self expansion of the prosthesis into the radially enlarged configuration, a release mechanism operable to retain the distal end of the prosthesis on the carrier in the radially reduced configuration when the tapered outer sheath is in the withdrawn position, the release mechanism also being operable to selectively release the distal end of the prosthesis from the carrier, and at least one actuator coupled to the release mechanism and the tapered outer sheath to selectively operate the release mechanism and move the tapered outer sheath,

(iii) operating the release mechanism to retain the distal end of the prosthesis on the carrier in the radially reduced configuration,

(iv) operating the enclosure mechanism moving the tapered outer sheath to the advanced position to enclose the prosthesis on the carrier in the radially reduced configuration

(v) after steps (ii) and (iii) and (iv) introducing the catheter into a hollow body organ or region of the blood vessel targeted for deployment of the prosthesis, and

(vi) after step (iv) (v), moving the tapered outer sheath to the withdrawn position without operating the release mechanism,

(vii) only after step (vi), operating the enclosure mechanism and the release mechanism to expose and release the distal end of the prosthesis from the carrier, and

(viii) fastening the prosthesis to body tissue within the blood vessel.

9 to 11 (Canceled).

12 (Currently Amended). A ~~system~~ method according to claim 11 ~~8~~
wherein the prosthesis comprises a stent structure.

13 to 14 (Canceled).

15 (Currently Amended). A ~~system~~ method according to claim 11 ~~8~~
wherein a region of the prosthesis is sized and configured to receive a fastening element to
secure the prosthesis to body tissue.